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# LETTER DATED 24 MARCH 1997 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE NETHERLANDS TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to draw your attention to the conclusions of the Council of the European Union of 24 March 1997 (see annex) regarding the present situation in Albania.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) J. BERTELING
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Deputy Permanent Representative
of the Netherlands to
the United Nations

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Annex

Albania: Conclusions of the Council of the European Union at its meeting in Brussels on 24 March 1997

1. The Council had an in-depth exchange of views on the situation in Albania on the basis of the report of the European Union mission that visited Albania from 17 to 19 March. It expressed appreciation for the mission's work and discussed further steps to be taken.

2. The Council reaffirmed the determination of the European Union to play the major role which was its responsibility in helping Albania to return to political stability and restore internal security, as well as in providing humanitarian assistance and in working with the international financial institutions on support for wider economic reforms.

3. Recognizing that Albania is a member of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), it noted also that many OSCE countries not members of the European Union have important roles to play and that OSCE has special experience and authority in a number of fields, notably in promoting a democratic process as well as supervising and monitoring elections. The Council accordingly expressed its support for the efforts undertaken by the current Chairman of OSCE, in particular concerning the mission entrusted to former Austrian Chancellor Vranitzky, which deserved to be supported and further strengthened. The Council decided that the European Union would cooperate within the coordinating framework of OSCE. It looked to the Council of Europe and other international organizations to play their part also within this framework in their respective areas of competence.

4. In this context the Council addressed the question of aid to Albania in the areas of humanitarian, economic and financial assistance, security and the preparation of future elections.

5. The Council decided to take the initiative of setting up an Advisory Mission to Albania within the framework of paragraph 3, to advise on humanitarian, economic, political and security-related developments. It would also assess the need for and feasibility of further assistance, taking account of the security situation and bearing in mind the particular problem of illegal migrants.

6. In order to prepare the ground for the Advisory Mission, the Council decided to dispatch an advance team without delay. This advance team, to which, in the spirit of paragraph 3, representatives of other international organizations would be invited, would make recommendations on the composition of the Advisory Mission and facilitate the arrival of humanitarian assistance.

7. The Council noted the need for humanitarian aid, and welcomed the intention of the European Commission's Humanitarian Office to respond generously to the immediate needs and to supply food and medicines. It also noted that further humanitarian assistance would be available by pre-positioning foodstocks as soon as security conditions allowed. It recalled the possibility of financing, under

the Humanitarian Aid Regulation, efforts to ensure that aid would be accessible to those for whom it was intended.

8. The Council noted the Commission's intention to focus future PHARE assistance on areas directly related to the relaunching of economic activity and the reform of public administration and of the media; and that financial support would have to be subject to close coordination with the international financial institutions.

9. The Council stressed that economic and financial support would also be subject to the re-establishment of the necessary secure environment.

10. The Council considered it important to assist Albania in the re-establishment of a viable police force and decided that the European Union would support this process through the appropriate measures, such as training. The Council also underlined the importance of assisting this process through appropriate monitoring and considered that the European Community Monitoring Mission could make a contribution to this effort.

11. Given present conditions of security in Albania, the Council welcomed the ongoing efforts of certain member States to assemble, at the request of the Government of Albania, a multinational protection force under the appropriate international aegis to help create a secure environment for the safe provision of international assistance.

12. The Council asked the appropriate Council instances to prepare a joint action for the Advisory Mission referred to in paragraph 5.

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